

# Crossing Paths



WITH WILDLIFE IN WASHINGTON TOWNS AND CITIES

Spring 1999

## New WDFW director values non-game wildlife recreation

### Newsletter survives

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's new director Dr. Jeffrey Koenings ("Kaynings") is committed to wildlife enthusiasts like you! Koenings, who took the reins in January, is a fish biologist by education and was a special assistant to Alaska's fish and wildlife director. Besides improving WDFW's financial management and restoring wild salmonids, Koenings' other top priority is providing more "non-consumptive" wildlife information and activities for the majority of citizens who neither hunt nor fish.

That, of course, includes the Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary program and this newsletter, which has obviously survived! In last fall's edition we surveyed you about future cost coverage of this publication. All of the results and decisions (one being to keep publishing!) are on page 6. Your responses included ways to improve this newsletter that you'll see in this edition. Enjoy!

## The right plants are critical to your backyard wildlife pond

More and more Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary managers across the state are adding ponds to their habitat. Standing water can greatly increase wildlife activity, but the kind of plants you choose in and around your pond can be critical. (If you missed our feature on building ponds, Spring 1994, see the references at the end of this article.)

The plants in your pond provide food, oxygen, shelter, hiding places, and platforms on which wildlife rest, forage, lay eggs, and metamorphose. Plants also stabilize the pond shoreline, hide the pond liner, and shade the surface of the water to limit algae growth and keep the water cool in summer.

Plants nearby may colonize on their own and some may come in with birds, but adding your own will speed the process along and assure you get what you want. (Never dump aquarium plants into your pond. Many are aggressive growers and can quickly take over.) Your pond should have no more than 65 percent of its surface covered with plants during the summer months. Oxygen

enters where water and air meet, and sunlight needs to reach submerged plants, algae, fish, and amphibian eggs.

As elsewhere in your landscape, the aim is to provide a variety of habitats for wildlife, so use a range of plant types in your pond. Aquatic plant nurseries are good places to view specimens.

**Submerged Plants** are rooted or free-floating plants that grow completely underwater. They grow in one to four feet of water and are extremely important because they release all their oxygen into the water rather than into the air. They also provide egg-laying sites and hiding places for fish, frogs, and other aquatic animals. The seeds and leafy stems may be eaten by ducks. These include **Coontail**, (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) and **Elodea**, (*Elodea canadensis*).

(Continued on page 7)

**Crossing Paths is a twice-yearly newsletter for Washington residents enrolled in the Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary Program.**

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[www.wa.gov/wdfw](http://www.wa.gov/wdfw)

### Crossing Paths Newsletter

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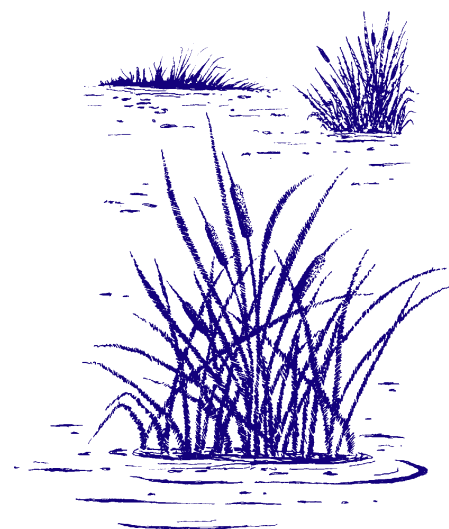
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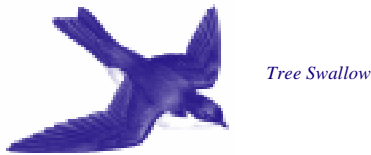
## Who's That?

This edition's "Who's That?" feature is on those birds of summer who grace our yards in so many look-alike species: **swallows**.

The return of swallows is familiar and their aerial acrobatics while swallowing bugs are well known.

But many backyard birders confuse some of the seven species that are native to Washington. Four of those seven commonly use backyard nestboxes or building eaves, and two of those four are most often mistaken for each other.

The **violet-green swallow** (*Tachycineta thalassina*) and the **tree swallow** (*Tachycineta bicolor*) are look-alikes because they're the same size (five inches) and shape (long pointed wings, notched tail tip) and both males and females share the same glossy green-blue-purple color on their backsides and snow white bellies. But there's an easy way to tell the species apart.



Tree Swallow



Violet-green Tree Swallow

The violet-green has white patches on the sides of its rump that almost meet over the base of its tail. Its white underbelly and throat also extends around its eye. Many field guides note that the violet-green swallow is more green than the tree swallow, which is more blue-black. But that's a difficult distinction to make in less-than-perfect light and when the birds are on the move.

The brownish-backed rough-winged and bank swallows are very similar to the tree swallow, but you aren't likely to see them in your backyard unless you live on a major body of water. Cliff swallows are also unlikely to be in your backyard, and

they have different coloration.

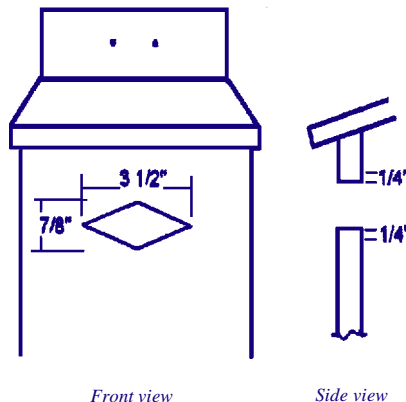
Both violet-green and tree swallows return to Washington backyards in March and April for territorial and courtship displays. Males do hovering flutter-flights near females, and pairs do "bowing" and bill touching rituals.

By May and through June these swallows are nest-building and breeding. Both species readily use nestboxes with 5-inch square floors, 6-8 inches deep, with a 1-1/2 inch entrance hole a couple of inches below the top. Violet-greens will also use shallower boxes with smaller diamond-shaped entrance holes with 1/4" beveled inside edges (see diagram). Tree swallows will use boxes placed lower, from four to 15 feet, and so they often ace out bluebirds for boxes.

All swallows prefer to nest close to their "kitchens" — where insects are abundant. Place nestboxes near water, wet areas, or dead trees.

Tree swallows, and perhaps violet-greens, occasionally seem to abandon a nesting area. One day they're active, and the next day they're gone, even during egg laying or incubating. These departures may occur on cloudy, cool days when insects are scarce. When they return, activities resume, with amazingly no ill effects on eggs or young.

Our other two backyard swallows are easy to distinguish: the barn swallow has a long, deeply-forked tail; the purple martin, only rarely seen on the westside, is completely blue-black.



Front view

Side view

## Make your count count!

If you've been counting birds at your winter feeders for us this past season, we're counting on you to return your survey forms to us by April 15 to make your information count.

About 1,000 backyard birders across the state help us from mid-November through March each year. We can always use more help and it's really pretty simple: you choose two consecutive days every other week to watch birds at your feeders for about half-an-hour, and keep track of them. If you'd like to be a part of all this counting, drop us a postcard at "Winter Bird Surveys" 16018 Mill Creek Blvd., Mill Creek, WA 98012 or e-mail: thomppat@dfw.wa.gov.



## Feeder birds count on your help in spring, too

Speaking of winter feeding birds and counting on things, did you know that the months of March and April can be some of the most critical for birds as they move into the spring breeding and nesting period?

Although studies have shown that most birds that use feeders also use natural food sources, it's also a given that most birds have an even greater food need when nest-building, egg-laying, incubating, and rearings young. Your early spring feeding may be as valuable as winter feeding.

A word of caution, however: warmer, wetter spring weather often demands greater diligence on your part to keep feeders and feed clean and healthy.

## Bird friendly coffee is made in the shade

If you like savoring that morning cup of coffee while watching birds in your backyard, better make sure it's shade-grown coffee.

Many birds that spend their summers in Washington depend on rainforest-like habitat for their winters in the tropics. These "neotropical migrants" include the American redstart, solitary vireo, and the black-throated gray, MacGillivray's, and Wilson's warblers.

Southern hemisphere shade coffee plantations support more birds than any other habitat except undisturbed tropical rainforests. Unfortunately, much coffee today is sun-grown — produced from monocultures of coffee planted in areas where trees have been cut down. Because of its higher yield and thereby cheaper price, most mainstream coffee brands are sun-grown.

The number of migratory bird species plummets when a coffee plantation is converted from shade to sun. One study found a decrease from 10 to 4 of the common species of birds on sun grown coffee plantations. Overall, there were 94-97% fewer bird species in sun grown coffee than in shade grown coffee.

If you don't think your coffee drinking can make a difference, consider this: the U.S. consumes about one-third of the world's coffee, and our Pacific Northwest share is a big part of that!

Coffee is the third most common import in the U.S. behind oil and steel. In the southern regions most heavily used by birds, coffee plantation "forests" comprise almost half of the permanent cropland. In southern Mexico, coffee plantations are equivalent to an area over half the size of all the major moist tropical forest reserves, providing critical woodland habitat in mid-elevation areas where virtually no large reserves are found. Parks and reserves alone can not provide adequate bird habitat.

The Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center (SMBC) has developed a summary of shade coffee management criteria for "Bird-Friendly™" coffee involving producers, traders, retailers and research-

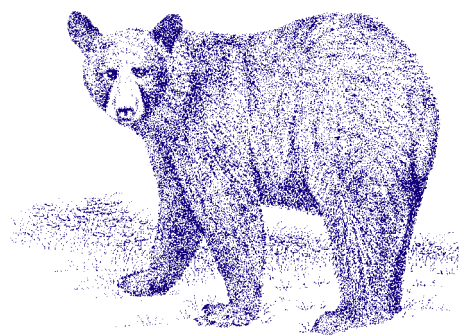
ers. These criteria outline the minimum shade management practices necessary in order for a coffee plantation to be certified as bird-friendly. You can find more information on bird-friendly shade coffee on SMBC's Internet website: [www.si.edu/natzoo/zooview/smbc](http://www.si.edu/natzoo/zooview/smbc).

To be confident of getting shade grown coffee, you can also consult with the Seattle Audubon Society (206-523-0722) or Spokane Audubon Society (509-838-5828). Each has a list of local shade grown coffee dealers. They also have information available for consumers (see **Seattle Audubon's** web site [www.seattleaudubon.org/Coffee](http://www.seattleaudubon.org/Coffee)). The American Birding Association sponsors **Song Bird Coffee** ([www.songbirdcoffee.com](http://www.songbirdcoffee.com)), roasted, blended and distributed by **Thanksgiving Coffee Company** ([www.catalog@thanksgivingcoffee.com](http://www.catalog@thanksgivingcoffee.com); 1-800-648-6491).

Currently shade coffee costs more than sun coffee. What are the birds worth to you?

## Perspective.....

Did you hear the one about the call that came in to the Fish and Wildlife officer, complaining about a black bear invading a backyard? The officer replied "That's funny, because I just got a call from a black bear who said someone had put up a house in his front yard!"



## Spokane bird study shows habitat difference

Thanks to about 1,800 hours of volunteer time over the last three years, a picture is developing of the bird diversity and abundance at two very different sites near Spokane.

During the spring and summer of 1996, 1997, and 1998, a total of 1,038 birds, representing 41 species, were captured in nets set up along the Little Spokane River. At the same time, 298 birds of 28 species, were captured on Mt. Spokane.

The results reflect the much greater diversity and abundance found in a riparian (streamside) area than in an upland forest site. This MAPS (Mapping Avian Productivity and Species) project entails aging, sexing, and banding the birds so that population and diversity changes over time can be detected.

## Raptors to watch

The results to date of a three-year-old wintering raptor survey in Spokane County are beginning to show just how "watchable" a lot of different birds of prey are near an urban area.

Since 1996, Spokane's urban wildlife biologist Howard Ferguson has been surveying five routes within 15 minutes of downtown Spokane to find out what species are present in what numbers. He's totaled 1,205 raptors of 12 species: American kestrel, Cooper's hawk, Great-horned owl, Northern harrier, Prairie falcon, Red-tailed hawk, Bald eagle, Golden eagle, Merlin, Northern goshawk, Rough-legged hawk, Sharp-shinned hawk. The (a) total number seen, (b) the approximate number of raptors per mile, and (c) the number of species seen, by the five different areas are:

	(a)	(b)	(c)
Big Meadows	298	18	6
Little Spokane	109	8	8
Hangman Valley	206	14	5
Saltese Flats	268	9	10
Coulee Hite	324	17	8

## Readers Write

*This space is reserved for your voice, and for some dialogue between us. Write us and we'll pass it along here.*

Roy & Toby P. of Seattle (Fall 1998 edition's letters) should rejoice if indeed they have a family of wood- rats visiting the spills from their bird feeder. Woodrats are beautiful, harmless creatures, usually found only in wooded areas. More likely they have a family of Norway rats, which are not native and very destructive to wildlife. They rob nests of eggs, prey on nestlings, (etc.) Norway rats love to live in English ivy, blackberry tangles, old sheds, garages, (etc.), and piles of...junk. Feeders can be protected (from rats) with squirrel baffles. A raised platform feeder on baffled poles might accomodate some of the ground feeding birds, while keeping the seed off the ground... They could also try getting a terrier, as I understand this breed was developed for rat hunting! Most cats won't tackle a Norway rat — too big and too mean!

— Peg F. (Monroe)

In response to the rat problem: We have less wasted seed and less mess by using the shelled sunflower chips and hearts. This may limit our species, but we are no longer cleaning up wasted seed by the shovelful.

— Ellen M. (Sumner)

I was very pleased to see the article about the danger cats pose to wildlife (Spring 1998 edition). Many wildlife lovers do not yet appreciate the extent of this threat... When my cats were allowed out I saw them devastate... salamanders, snakes, frogs, and squirrels, and kill numerous birds and rabbits in my yard. I'm writing to tell of a solution I've found...(We) built a "cat garden" as an outdoor room (wire-mesh fenced area adjacent to the house) for our three cats. They had been kept inside for the past two years, but seemed discontented and still cried to get outside. (A) cat door in the window of the house (allows them) to go in and out freely, safe from coyotes and unable to hunt themselves. I have several bird feeders nearby, so they are well entertained by the birds, (etc.) The cats use their "garden" day and night. The cats have all become more active and get along better with each other.

— Karen M. (Port Townsend)

I'd love to see raccoons at a feeding station. I can attract opossums to my backyard, but have only seen a raccoon pass through once.

— Elizabeth G. (Bothell)

*Editor's note: Since both are omni- vores (eat everything from fruit to garbage!), perhaps there's just not much of a raccoon population. Too bad since raccoons are native, but opossums are not (they wandered north from California introduction years ago.) Be careful feeding either — both can quickly become a nuisance.*

Thanks for the "Fall's Don't Do List" (Fall 1998 edition) I rarely do fall yard work. It's good to know laziness pays off!

— Anonymous

*Editor's note: Glad you enjoyed the tips, but it's Flora Johnson Skelly who deserves the credit for those gems. Flora is a Redmond area wildlife gardener extraordinaire who freelances ("Wild Words") and first published those "Don't Do's" in Northwest Garden News. We apologize for failing to acknowledge her contribution.*

I'm very fond of treefrogs and hoped to attract some to my garden (pond)...friends have given me treefrogs and...tadpoles. All were thriving until green frogs showed up. There are unfortunately many ponds in Renton and Kent with bullfrogs and green frogs — both (non-native) and deadly to treefrogs. They eat their eggs, tadpoles, and froglets. The green frogs wiped out 20 or more of the tads in my pond. I read that a frog pond sanctuary is being developed in Renton, (and) a toad bridge in Issaquah to bypass new development. However, if all the green and bull frogs we've seen continue to breed, treefrogs, small fish and birds are in a lot of trouble. I understand that water nurseries can no longer sell bull and green frogs, but out-of-state companies still offer them.

— Frances T. (Seattle)

(We) have lived on the east side of Dishman Hills (Natural Area) for 21 years. For the first time (last year) I spotted a pileated woodpecker... working on a tree behind our house. What a sight! He was stripping bark from one of the ice storm-damaged trees.

— Patti M. (Spokane)

I feel there's a need for (WDFW) focus on urban and suburban wildlife, a niche not covered by other organizations. King County and Seattle have increasing public involvement in urban flora and fauna. And the state is involved with these and others in endangered salmon, bears and cougars in yards, (etc)... But I've not seen you define your niche, nor relate with expertise of other entities... You are a public entity and you have a niche worthy of public support.

— Richard C. (Seattle)



## Calendar of Events

**March 27-28:** Sandhill Crane Festival — Othello, Adams County; field trips, speakers (including International Crane Foundation director/founder George Archibald), other events; call Othello Chamber of Commerce, 509-488-2683 or 1-800-684-2556 for more info.

**April 18-24:** National Wildlife Week, sponsored by National Wildlife Federation with free educator kits distributed by WDFW; this year's theme: "Keep the Wild Alive — a Campaign to Help Save Endangered Species," including info on chinook salmon, gray wolf, bald eagle.

**April 22:** Earth Day — How's your piece of the earth faring?

**April 24:** Arbor Day — plant a tree!

**April 30-May 2:** 4th annual Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival at Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge, Hoquiam; call Grays Harbor Audubon Society (360-495-3289) for details on field trips, other events.

**May 9:** International Migratory Bird Day — check closest National Wildlife Refuge for local activities.

**June 5-6:** 9<sup>th</sup> annual Open Yard - Bird Fair, Spokane, sponsored by backyard wildlifers Gerry and Ron Krueger, E. 11415 Krueger Lane, 509-922-1344; tours of gardens, sales of plants, bird wares, etc., info from WDFW bios.

**June 19:** 4<sup>th</sup> King County Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary Festival, sponsored by Rainer Audubon Society and WDFW; more information coming soon on website (<http://rainier.wa.audubon.org>) or call Debbie Fisher, 253-852-7766.

## Calling all "on-liners"

A couple of information exchange services of interest to backyard wildlifery are available free to any Internet electronic mail users.

WDFW is helping sponsor the **pnw-natives** discussion service, a forum on gardening with Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington, British Columbia) native plants, especially gardening to rebuild habitat for wildlife. Topics run the gamut from how to keep a pond from completely freezing in the winter to combating invasive weeds. To subscribe, send an empty e-mail to: [subscribe-pnw-natives@telelists.com](mailto:subscribe-pnw-natives@telelists.com). Follow the return message instructions to complete the subscription process. If you have any problems, contact [allyn@teleport.com](mailto:allyn@teleport.com).

The other on-line service is a bird watching group called "**Tweeters**" that has been on-line for almost five years now. Subscribers are mostly in the Pacific Northwest, but postings from birders across the country have occurred. To subscribe, send e-mail to [listproc@u.washington.edu](mailto:listproc@u.washington.edu) with the text line "information tweeters." This will give you more details on how to subscribe.

Back in February the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual "Great Backyard Bird Count" was conducted via the Internet. This 3-day bird counting effort created an immense snapshot of winter bird distribution and population status across the continent. More than 12,000 backyard bird counters posted information on 134 species, adding to a database to help detect broad scale changes. The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual count is planned for Feb. 18-20, 2000. You can participate at: <http://birdsource.cornell.edu/gbbc/>. This project's sponsors include Cornell University's Ornithology Lab [www.birds.cornell.edu/](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/) (which also brings you Project FeederWatch), and National Audubon Society [www.audubon.org/](http://www.audubon.org/)



## Help wanted to learn more about bats



You can help WDFW and Bat Conservation International (BCI) learn more about the roosting needs of Washington bats by monitoring a bat house.

Many homeowners, farmers, organic gardeners, foresters, and recreation managers are installing bat houses for education and pest reduction. Unfortunately, many bat houses do not meet the needs of bats or do not come with adequate instructions. Much has been learned about the needs of crevice-roosting bats since BCI started the North American Bat House Research Project (NABRP) in 1993.

We invite you to help us continue to learn about bats as a volunteer Research

Associate. NABRP Research Associates monitor their bat house(s) and report the results using a data sheet. To volunteer you can either:

1) Send your request with \$10 to NABRP (P.O. Box 162603, Austin, TX 78716) and receive "The Bat House Builder's Handbook", a semiannual project newsletter, instructions for conducting bat house experiments, a Data Report Form, and opportunities for small grants and special recognition; or

2) Send your request and no money to WDFW (Attention: Russell Link, 16018 Mill Creek Blvd., Mill Creek, WA 98012) and receive bat house designs, basic instructions, and a Data Report Form.

The local group Bats Northwest (4742 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98116, 206-256-0406) will also help with this project.



## We asked, you answered: Keep newsletter coming, cover costs with select ads or higher enrollment fees

Those who responded last fall to our “Future of Crossing Paths” survey told us overwhelmingly that you want this publication to continue and that select advertising or sponsorship, or higher program enrollment fees, are the most acceptable ways to cover rising costs.

A total of 825 of the 5,400 current newsletter recipients responded for a 15 percent return rate. This was a non-random survey (after all, a whopping 97% of respondents told us they always read, used and/or enjoyed this newsletter!), but it provided WDFW with some good ideas of what many want and how we might cover costs.

The most popular (82%) option for cost coverage was **advertising** from bird-feeding, garden, and other backyard wildlife related businesses. But many comments tempered that response.

Many felt strongly that ads from businesses would have to follow very high standards for appropriateness, being backyard wildlife related, and being environmentally correct. Many were concerned that ads would take too much space away from desired information.

Some suggested a middle ground — securing a **sponsorship** for the newsletter by a non-profit group or an environmentally-acceptable business.

The second most popular (75%) option was **increasing the program enrollment fee**, possibly from the current \$5 to \$10. But this also drew the highest number of comments. Most thought an increase would discourage participation, especially by young, old, and lower income people. Many reminded us that the purpose of the program is to encourage more wildlife habitat enhancement. Others pointed out that this is not a long-term, sustainable solution to covering costs — the one-time fee use to cover an on-going service is the crux of the problem.

Also, 68% said yes to paying a small **subscription fee** for the current newsletter; 53% said they might subscribe to an expanded, more frequent publication that included information beyond backyard

interests. The idea of an expanded version, however, drew much comment about no interest in fishing, hunting, political, or other non-backyard issues.

Although 51% use the **Internet**, only 29% said that an Internet version of the newsletter alone would be satisfactory. The most cited reason for that difference was the need for notification of its availability. Many advised providing both versions and letting “on-liners” drop off the mailing as desired.

More (57%) wanted to keep the newsletter twice a year. Those who chose between spring and fall editions were evenly split at 20% each.

More (47%) wanted to keep the newsletter as is rather than cut from 8 to 4 pages (39%) or cut from twice a year to once a year (14%).

Many suggested bulk mailing rates, but for lack of equipment we weren’t able to meet postal service requirements for computerized sorting. The bulk rate saves us \$540 a year — a help but not the whole solution.

Others suggested cheaper paper and ink. We’re doing that now, saving about \$300 a year and still meeting self-mailer requirements.

Several commented that it was “absurd,” “shameful,” or “depressing” that the state could not fund this small

but valuable service.

**All of the input brought WDFW to the decision to scrounge budgets to continue this newsletter in the short term, and to seek a major sponsorship (or possibly go to select advertising) for long-term support.**

We’re also planning to support this newsletter with funds from the national “Teaming With Wildlife” effort, IF it passes Congress. (TWW, if you recall, started five years ago proposing a tax on non-game wildlife recreation equipment; now offshore oil drilling fees are being considered.)

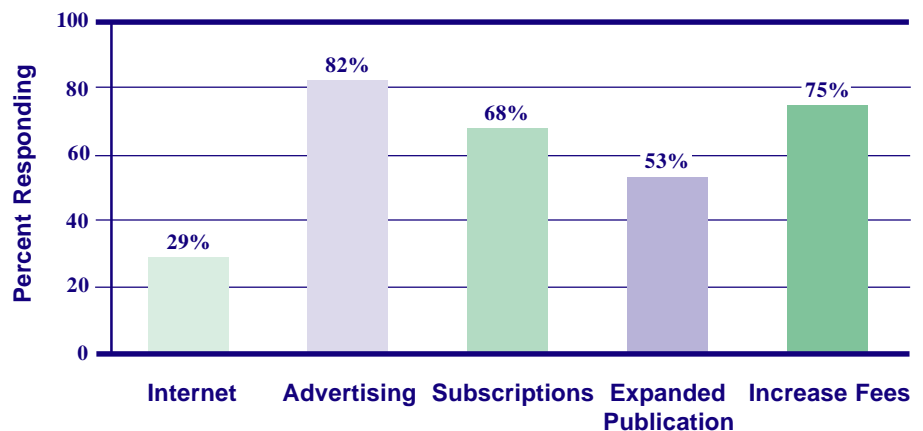
We do not plan to increase program enrollment fees. We also will not consider subscription fees, partly because the staff time involved would likely offset too much of the gain.

**We will offer this newsletter on WDFW’s Internet website ([www.wa.gov/wdfw](http://www.wa.gov/wdfw)) under Wildlife, posted by April and October with past editions archived. We ask Internet users who are happy with that version alone to advise us to drop their mailing.**

We’re also following your advice to keep the “Who’s That?” animal features, and all plant features, and to keep articles short.

Thanks to all survey respondents -- you’ve saved “Crossing Paths”!

### Results of Reader Survey on Funding "Crossing Paths"



## (Pond plants, continued from pg.1)

**Floating Leaf Plants** float either on or raised slightly above the pond surface. Their roots are generally one to three feet below the water's surface. Leaves of water lilies and other floating water plants provide shade for fish, resting places for frogs and dragonflies, breeding places for water beetles and snails, and attachment sites for other aquatic animals including caddisflies and midges. Ducks, shorebirds, and muskrats eat the plants and the aquatic insects that live with it. Deer eat the leaves, stems, and flowers of pond lily; beavers eat the rhizomes. Floating plants, such as water fern and duckweed, can spread very quickly. Plants in this group include:

- **Water fern** (*Azolla mexicana*)
- **Watershield** (*Brasenia schreberi*)
- **Duckweed** (*Lemna minor*)
- **Yellow pond lily** (*Nuphar lutea* ssp. *polysepala*)
- **Pondweed** (*Potamogeton natans*)
- **Bladderwort** (*Utricularia vulgaris*)

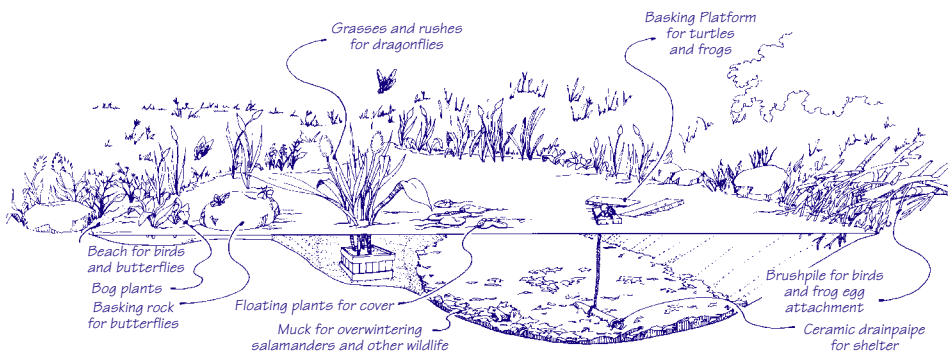
**Marginal Plants** create the immediate habitat surrounding your pond and thrive in six to 12 inches of water. These plants help camouflage the edges of a pond constructed with an artificial liner. Most can be grown in containers. In an

earthen pond, they help strengthen the banks by preventing shoreline erosion. Marginal plants are used as habitat by birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles. Floating plants, such as spike rush and cattail, can spread very quickly. Marginal plants include:

- **Great water-plantain** (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*)
- **Inflated sedge** (*Carex vesicaria*)
- **Spike rush** (*Eleocharis palustris*)
- **Wapato, duck potato, arrowhead** (*Sagittaria latifolia*)
- **Hardstem bulrush** (*Scirpus acutus*)
- **Wool grass** (*Scirpus cyperinus*)
- **Small-fruited bulrush** (*Scirpus microcarpus*)
- **Soft-stem bulrush** (*Scirpus validus*)
- **Cattail** (*Typha latifolia*)

There are also some plants you should NOT use in or around your wildlife pond. These noxious weeds and/or very invasive plants include:

- **Brazilian elodea** (*Egeria densa*)
- **Purple loosestrife** (*Lythrum salicaria*)
- **Eurasian water milfoil** (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)
- **Parrot's feather** (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)



For information on constructing a wildlife pond, refer to these publications:

“Ponds: Planning, Design, Construction,” Ag.Handbook #590, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA

“Landscape Design: Ponds Notebook #2,” NRCS, USDA

“Urban Wildlife Managers Notebook 2: Simple Backyard Pond,” National Institute for Urban Wildlife, 10921 Trotting Ridge Way, Columbia, MD 21044

“Water in the Garden: A Complete Guide to Design and Installation of Ponds, Fountains, Streams, and Waterfalls,” by James Allison; Little, Brown & Co., 1991

“Garden Pools and Fountains,” by Edward B. Clafin; Ortho Books, 1988

“For Your Garden: Pools, Ponds, and Waterways,” by Dawn Tucker Grinstein; Grove Weidenfeld, 1991.

## Can we design a better future for wildlife?

Remember first visualizing your backyard as a wildlife sanctuary? Using program materials, perhaps you sketched out a landscape design and dreamed of wild animals using it.

Envisioning the future for wildlife on a statewide scale is what a potentially new WDFW resource planning process is all about. It's called “**Alternative Futures**” because it predicts how conditions alternative to current ones could benefit fish, wildlife, and other natural resources.

This process could provide new planning tools and forums for land-owners, planners, and elected officials for informed decision-making. It could help current issues like salmon, but more importantly it could identify fish and wildlife problems in the making that are not yet evident.

Instrumental to the process is the Washington **Gap Analysis Project** which has identified unprotected (“gaps” in protection of) habitats across the state where animal distribution is predicted. Combined with known distribution data, like our **Priority Habitats and Species** work, it advances us to “alternative futures.”

In concert with GAP, the Department of Urban Design and Planning at University of Washington is now developing ways to apply that information to local land use plans. A pilot project localized GAP in 1997-98 in Spokane County because of its existing planning and Geographical Information System (GIS).

Now Pierce County is piloting a project, not only because of its GIS planning status, but also for its broad range of habitat types, development densities, and current conservation issues. It will help the county's open space mapping, salmon recovery, and current watershed analysis.

We hope “Alternative Futures” does for Washington what backyard wildlife managing does for you!



**Washington Department  
of Fish and Wildlife  
Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary Program**

**Westside:** 16018 Mill Creek Blvd.,  
Mill Creek, Wa. 98012/425-775-1311  
**Eastside:** N. 8702 Division St.,  
Spokane, Wa. 99218/509-456-4082

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will provide equal opportunities to all potential and existing employees without regard to race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, or Vietnam Era Veteran's status.

The department receives Federal Aid for fish and wildlife restoration.

The department is subject to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin or handicap. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any department program, activity, or facility, or if you want further information about Title VI or Section 504, write to: Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, or Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, 600 Capitol Way N, Olympia WA 98501-1091.

## No legal status, but property values enhanced

One of the most commonly asked questions, or incorrect assumptions, about WDFW's Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary program is regarding legal status.

Certification in the program does NOT provide your property with any new or different legal status, in terms of planning or zoning protections or restrictions. The program is simply an information-and-education one, encouraging you to maintain habitat for wildlife through the certification symbolized by the outdoor sign and frameable certificate we provide.

However, the efforts you make to obtain certification may help in property value appreciation. We've heard over the years of properties selling at a higher rate partly due to the natural landscaping for wildlife. A displayed certification sign can draw the attention of potential buyers who are also interested in wildlife.

Which reminds us to remind you: **If you need a replacement or additional sign, you can get one (or up to two) at the Mill Creek or Spokane WDFW offices for \$1.50 each (plus postage if you request mailing.)**

## Tell Your Friends:

◆ ◆ ◆ **Personalized Plates Help Wildlife** ◆ ◆ ◆

The Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary program, along with other non-game functions of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), is funded by the sale of Washington state personalized motor vehicle license plates. These distinctive plates — in your choice of unclaimed word(s) up to seven letters — cost an extra \$46 for the first year and an extra \$30 for each subsequent year. You can pick up an application form at any state licensing or WDFW office, or by contacting the Department of Licensing at P.O. Box 9042, Olympia, WA 98507, 360-902-3770 (telephone menu option #5).

